

4/4 You explained how you grade, why you grade that way, and what the grades mean.

Dear Parents,

Let's be honest: Grades can be confusing sometimes! This letter is my attempt to explain to you how I collect grades, and how I come up with that letter you see on the report card. First, grades represent your child's mastery of the concepts/standards we are covering throughout the nine weeks. In the state of Georgia, we have performance standards that each child should master before moving on to the next grade level. These standards not only guide my teaching, but my assessments of your child's knowledge of these standards are where I get my grades. I encourage you to go to the following website to familiarize yourself with the 5th grade Georgia Performance Standards: <https://www.georgiastandards.org>.

My intentions are to do everything in my power to help your child master the standards of 5th grade. The learning goals in this class include trying your best, completing all assignments on time, and providing a valid picture of what you know. I intend to work extremely hard for your child this school year, and I just ask your child to do the work to the best of their ability each and every day. I will provide your child with instruction and valid assessments of their knowledge, but it is your child's job to complete the assignments and make sure I have a picture of what they know and do not know.

In order to provide continuity among schools, Clayton County has mandated all teachers in the county follow the same weights for grades. Weights are put in place to provide a clearer picture of mastery of the standards. For example, a homework grade should not weigh as much as a unit test. I strategically place standards based grades in the class work section to provide a clearer picture of how your child is mastering the standards. In the chart below you will find how each of the grades your child receives in my class are weighted. I have also shown what kinds of assignments I include in each of these areas. Please refer to the assessment letter for a deeper understanding of the types of assessments.

Clayton County Grade Weights

Grade Type	Weight	Language Arts Examples	Science Examples
Class work	50%	Weekly grammar concept grades by standard, assignments completed in class	Labs/lab sheets, Spotlight Workbook assignments, standards based assessments
Tests	15%	Reading Series grammar unit summative assessments, teacher created grammar grades	Unit Science tests (summative)
Quizzes	15%	Spelling quizzes, Turning Point check-in quizzes (formative)	Turning Point check-in quizzes (formative)
Projects	15%	Group assignments, Author's Share participation, Self-assessments on writing assignments (rubrics provided)	Science Fair components pieces, unit long projects, and group class work (rubrics provided)
Homework	5%	Participation for completed	Participation for completed

		homework assignments	homework assignments
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As you can see from above, the sections of grading are class work, tests, quizzes, projects, and homework. Tests are given at the end of each unit and cover concepts that have been covered throughout the unit of study. These times vary due to the length of the unit and the student's ability to grasp the concepts. Quizzes are given bi-weekly. These are short formative assessments on elements of the standards. I give one project per nine weeks in each area study. These projects are given with rubrics of expectations. Projects are a chance for your child to apply their knowledge of the standards in situations other than a test like question. Homework is graded on participation only because it is meant to be practice. I do not expect your child to master every homework assignment, but I do expect them to give it a try and practice what we are learning on their own.

In the assessment letter provided to you earlier, I discussed how assessments guide my teaching and they are very different from grades. There are many times when I give an assessment just to check for understanding, and it is not put in the grade book. When I feel the class has had ample time, practice, and application of the standard, I will then give an assessment that is put into the grade book. Since your child's grades come from mastery of the standards and not the overall subject, this will explain the confusion of an A one nine weeks and a C the next nine weeks. I often have students that excel in one area of science or language arts and struggle in another. I encourage you to check parent gradebook weekly to stay on top of how your child is doing my class:

<https://www.clayton.k12.ga.us/gradebook/gbklogin1.asp> . In the grade book, I explain in detail each assignment and assign the standard the assignment addresses.

Below you will find the chart that explains what each letter grade truly means regarding mastery of standards/content. I will never give your child a zero, even if the work was not completed. Zeros are extremely hard to recover from, and work that is not completed is not a reflection of what they know. I will contact you when your child falls below a C to discuss a plan for assisting your child; however, you may contact me at anytime to discuss your child's grades and progress. Behavior and work habits are not included in my grading system. There is a section on each progress report and report card that addresses these areas. These areas could affect their grades simply by not following the learning goals of the class. It is hard to provide a passing grade, when the student doesn't complete the work at all.

A	Excellent	90-100	Exceeding content expectations
B	Satisfactory	80-89	Meeting content expectations
C	Needs Improvement	71-79	Working towards meeting content expectations
D	Unsatisfactory	70	Inadequate progress toward meeting content expectations
F	Failing	69 and below	Did not meet content expectations
NC/I	No Credit/Incomplete		Enrolled 10 days or less Work requirements not complete

I hope this letter was able to give you a better understanding of the world of grades. I know that my parents and I would have benefited from a letter like this when I was growing up. If you are still unclear about any part of how your child receives a grade in my class, please contact me anytime.